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DE RUEHUM #0616/01 2260720
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FM AMEMBASSY ULAANBAATAR
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0245
INFO RUEHRB/AMEMBASSY RABAT 0008
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 5178
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 2398
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP WASHINGTON DC 0339

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ULAANBAATAR 000616

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OREP](#) [AMGT](#) [PREL](#) [PREF](#) [MG](#)

SUBJECT: Country Clearance for Staffdel Bixby

Ref: State 131325 (notal)

¶1. Embassy warmly welcomes and grants country clearance for the August 22-26 visit by HIRC staff members Melanie Bixby, Paul Oostburg Sanz, and Lynne Weil to examine the proposed Millennium Challenge Account programs in Mongolia.

¶2. Embassy control officer for the visit will be DCM Brian Goldbeck, assisted by Economic/Political chief Patrick Freeman. Contact information follows. Mongolia is 13 hours ahead of Eastern Daylight Time.

Brian Goldbeck
goldbeckbl@state.gov
Cell: (976) 9904-5336
Home: (976-11) 326-424
Embassy phone: (976-11) 329-095 x 4545

Patrick J. Freeman
freemanpj@state.gov
Cell: (976) 9904-5337
Home: (976-11) 313-212
Embassy phone: (976-11) 329-095 x 4771

Embassy Fax: (976-11) 320-776

¶3. Embassy has reserved three rooms for the staffdel at the Khan Palace Hotel. The rate is within per diem. The phone number for the Khan Palace Hotel is: (976-11) 463-463, and fax is: (976-11) 463-464. The rate includes breakfast. An Internet connection is available in the room. The hotel's website is:
<http://www.khanpalace.com>.

¶4. Embassy will meet and assist the staffdel at the airport on arrival and departure. Information on the notional schedule for Mongolia will be sent via email.

¶5. VISA: A visa is not required for Mongolia. If you will travel via Beijing, you must have a valid Chinese visa for each time you land in China. This means a double-entry visa if your itinerary is Beijing-Ulaanbaatar-Beijing. The Chinese require a visa even to transit between two international flights. If you don't have a valid (unused) visa, the airline will not let you board, and your travel will be delayed.

¶6. DOMESTIC AIR TRAVEL RESTRICTION: The U.S. Embassy prohibits U.S. government personnel use of the domestic services of MIAT and all services of Hangard and Trans-Ulgii for official travel because of uncertainties regarding service and maintenance schedules, aircraft certification and insurance status. This prohibition does not extend to MIAT's international flights.

¶7. EXPORT LIMITS: Mongolia limits the export of art, antiques, and icons. Reputable art and antique dealers can give you documents that will let you export what you buy. Customs duties, however, may apply, and you must be ready to pay in cash (not credit card). We

can give you more information.

18. SECURITY SITUATION: Mongolia and Ulaanbaatar are generally safe places to visit. Mongolians accept foreigners readily and are congenial hosts. There is no known specific threat to Americans. However, the poor economic situation and obviousness of foreigners makes us easy targets for petty crime. We strongly recommend that you carry only the money you expect to need and leave your passport, wallet, and other valuables in the hotel's safekeeping. We recommend that you be especially cautious at night and in crowded public places, such as the "black market," within and in front of the State Department shopping store, and anywhere foreigners frequent. Pickpocketing is an increasing problem.

19. HEALTH CARE: Health care for Embassy personnel and visitors is provided by the Embassy's Health Unit and the SOS International Clinic in Ulaanbaatar.

The Embassy's Health Unit's telephone number is (976-11) 313-133. The hours of operation are Monday through Friday 1:00pm - 5:00pm. For appointments outside of scheduled office hours please call Eric Wood at 9905-2911.

The SOS International Clinic's telephone/fax number is (976-11) 342-550. The clinic is expensive and requires payment upon receipt of services. It is important that your health insurance is up to date. Filling an insurance claim is the responsibility of the visitor. SOS International takes MasterCard, Visa, or cash as payment.

110. GENERAL MEDICAL INFORMATION: We suggest that you talk with your medical office about recommended inoculations. Over-the-counter drugs such as cold, fever, and painkiller medications are not readily available. Plan to bring enough over-the-counter and

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prescription medicines to last your entire time in Mongolia. You should take health precautions in Mongolia: drink only bottled or boiled drinks, and eat only hot, freshly prepared food. Also, we recommend that you wear sturdy shoes with good traction.

111. WEATHER: Ulaanbaatar has an extreme continental climate. The weather is unpredictable. It can be cold anytime September through May, and is extremely cold November through February. Summertime temperatures can approach 100 degrees Fahrenheit but may dip into the 50's. Spring is an uncertain time of year, with occasional high winds and snow. We recommend you be prepared with layers of clothing and warm, sturdy footwear. Several internet sites, including Yahoo! Weather, give forecasts for Ulaanbaatar.

112. DOLLARS AND TUGRUGS: Mongolia's financial infrastructure is still limited. Traveler's checks are rarely accepted. Mongolia is a predominantly cash based economy. Western-oriented businesses and hotels accept credit cards - Visa, MasterCard, and American Express. Hotels provide official currency exchange. ATMs are infrequent and unreliable. The few existing units are VISA only.

113. WEBSITE: Please visit our Embassy website at <http://ulaanbaatar.usembassy.gov>. It provides interesting and useful information. Mongolia is a beautiful and fascinating country; we hope you will have a chance to see a bit of it after work hours.

114. We look forward to your arrival. Regards.

SLUTZ